
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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Sitka Area Office
304 Lake St. Room 103
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Time: 1:30 p.m.

2017 WINTER DEMERSAL SHELF ROCKFISH FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sitka...The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced today the following information regarding the 2017 Southeast Outside (SEO) Subdistrict directed Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR) commercial fishery. The seven species in the DSR assemblage are yelloweye, quillback, canary, copper, china, tiger, and rosethorn rockfish.

The directed fishery will open in the East Yakutat (EYKT) Section at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, February 1, 2017. This area will remain open until the harvest allocation is taken or 4:00 p.m., March 10, 2017, whichever occurs first. The directed fishery will remain closed in the Northern Southeast Outside (NSEO), Central Southeast Outside (CSEO), and Southern Southeast Outside (SSEO) Sections (see attached map). For information regarding the 2017 directed DSR fishery in the Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) and Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistricts, refer to the ADF&G news release issued on December 5, 2016.

Harvest Quota for the Directed DSR Fishery

Area	Round lb
EYKT	59,228

The 2017 acceptable biological catch (ABC) for DSR in the SEO Subdistrict is 500,449 round lb. After deduction of the 2017 DSR subsistence harvest estimate (15,432 round lb), 5 AAC 28.160 (c)(1)(A) allocates the DSR total allowable catch as follows: 84% (407,414 round lb) to commercial fisheries and 16% (77,603 round lb) to recreational fisheries. This commercial quota is then apportioned by management area based on the contribution of that area to the overall biomass. The quota remaining for the directed commercial DSR fishery is set after deductions for DSR bycatch mortality in other fisheries are made. Areas are opened to directed fishing if there is sufficient resource to conduct an orderly fishery and if there are no area-specific conservation concerns.

Based on information available at the time of assessment the SSEO, CSEO, and NSEO areas will remain closed for the 2017 season. Results from the 2013 SSEO DSR survey indicated a significant decline in yelloweye rockfish biomass from that surveyed in 2005. The 2012 assessment of CSEO produced the lowest density estimate on record and the continuation of a declining trend seen since 2003. CSEO and NSEO were recently surveyed during the 2016 field season however analysis of that data was not

completed in time to be included in the 2017 assessment. The department anticipates the SSEO area will be surveyed in 2017 and that information, along with updated biomass estimates for CSEO and NSEO, will be included in the 2018 stock assessment.

General Provisions

Fishermen are required to register their vessel with the department prior to participating in the winter directed DSR fishery. Vessels that previously registered to fish in NSEI or SSEI in 2017 must re-register if they plan to fish in the EYKT fishery. Logbooks are required and a copy of the logbook pages detailing the landing must be attached to the fish ticket at the time of that landing. Fishermen are required to report on logbooks the latitude and longitude (degrees and decimal minutes) for start and end positions of each set, amount of gear (skates and hooks), depth of each set, and amount of catch per set by species. Logbooks are available at ADF&G area offices.

In the Southeast District, DSR may be taken in the directed fishery by longline, hand troll, dinglebar troll, and mechanical jig gear. A Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) “Y” interim use permit is required for the directed fishery. Permit holders or vessels fishing in EYKT may not sell more than 12,000 pounds (bled weight) of DSR in any five-day period. Full retention and reporting of all DSR is required. All DSR taken in excess of trip limits by a vessel or CFEC permit holder in any five-day period must be landed, weighed, and reported as overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. DSR trip limit overage is forfeited and all proceeds from the sale of excess DSR shall be surrendered to the state.

Vessels fishing for groundfish in federal waters must have a Federal Fisheries Permit. For information on federal permits contact NOAA Fisheries at 800-304-4846 or 907-586-7202. Vessels greater than 26 feet fishing for groundfish with longline gear must comply with seabird avoidance requirements specified in 50 C.F.R. 679.24. Fishermen are reminded that there are four federal Coral Habitat Protection Areas (HAPC) on the Fairweather Grounds that are closed to all fishing with bottom contact gear. Locations of the GOA Coral Habitat Protection Areas are detailed in Table 26 to Part 679 at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/tab126.pdf>. For additional information on HAPC areas, contact NOAA Fisheries at 907-586-7228. For questions regarding federal regulations or bycatch allowances, contact NOAA enforcement at 907-586-7225.

Bycatch Provisions

Bycatch provisions for EYKT DSR longline permits are listed in the following table. All bycatch is calculated round weight, based on the round weight of the DSR sold. Bycatch allowances in state waters match federal waters allowances unless otherwise noted.

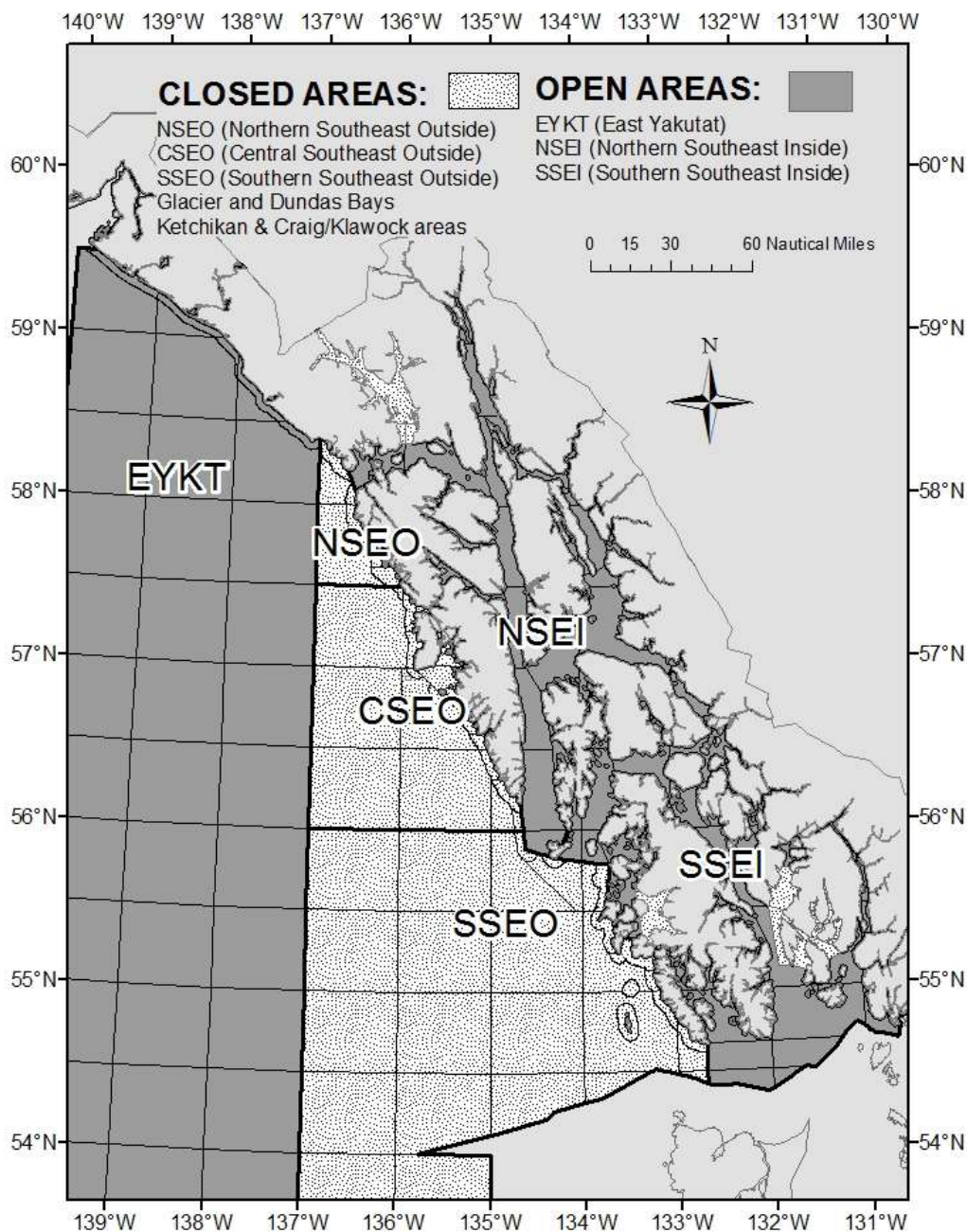
BYCATCH SPECIES	EYKT BYCATCH ALLOWANCE
Lingcod ¹	35%.
Shortraker and Rougheye Rockfish	7% in aggregate.
Black, Blue and Dark Rockfish	15% in aggregate. Full retention required for black rockfish.
Other Rockfish and Thornyheads	15% in aggregate.
Pacific cod	20%. Full retention when directed Pacific cod fishery is open.
Sablefish	0%, no retention.
Other Groundfish	See Table 10 for maximum retainable percentages in federal waters ²

¹minimum size limit- 27” from tip of snout to tip of tail or 20.5” from front of dorsal fin to tip of tail.

²Table 10 federal bycatch percentages: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/tab10.pdf>

Catch and effort will be closely monitored and area closures may occur on short notice. Closures will be announced by ADF&G news release, United States Coast Guard “Notice to Mariners” report and the National Weather Service broadcast. Closure updates will also be available on the Groundfish Telephone Hotline at 907-747-4882.

The Emergency Order corresponding with this announcement is EO 1G0317.



**This map is for general reference only.
EYKT is open for directed fishing for DSR at 9:00 a.m. February 1, 2017**

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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